

was no "choking." It appears, therefore, that the song-display ("choking") of this species is dependent song.

From the above it will be seen that whilst independent song, (i.e. true or typical song) occurred, as would be expected, in the Passeres tested (*Turdidae*, *Fringillidae*), it also occurred in parrakeets (*Psittacidae*), pheasants and fowls (*Phasianidae*) and rails (*Rallidae*). On the other hand, in examples of ducks (*Anatidae*), waders (*Charadriidae*) and gulls (*Laridae*) the song was found to be dependent song. The Lady Amherst Pheasant was interesting in having two different and well developed songs, one independent, the other dependent. In song-displays it was found that the song may be either independent (Cut-throat Weaver) or dependent (Mallard). Sub-song was found to be as freely independent as typical territorial song.

It seems likely that independent song is an original or deep seated type of song which probably occurred first as sub-song. It has now evolved in many instances into distinctive forms to serve various functions, notably typical territorial song. Dependent song appears to be more in the nature of non-song notes which have been impressed into use as song notes and which have the function of song, but lack the essential quality of independence.

In the wild, independent song is probably an important and safe outlet for male energy, reducing in this way unnecessary fighting and other activities. This aspect of the song may also account for the relatively contented behaviour in cages of male independent singers when in full breeding condition.

All observations mentioned above, with the exception of those on the Skylark, Corn-Crake and Kittiwake, were made at the World Bird Research Station at Glanton, Northumberland.

References:

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A new race of Babbler (*Trichastoma abbotti*) from Central Annam

by MR. R. W. SIMS

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Arising from an enquiry made by Mr. H. G. Deignan of the United States National Museum it appeared that some specimens of the babbler *Trichastoma abbotti* in the British Museum (Natural History) represent an undescribed race. Mr. Deignan has asked that a name should be given them so that it can be included in the section of Peter's *Check List of the Birds of the World* on which he is working. The specimens were examined

by Mrs. B. P. Hall but she left for Africa before a note could be prepared; she has now given me permission to publish a description. I agree with her that the specimens have distinctive characters and appear to represent a valid race which is named as follows:—

Trichastoma abbotti alterum new race.

Description: Nearest to *williamsoni* Deignan, 1948, but the crown is duller in colour and the forehead less streaked; the remainder of the upper parts are also slightly duller being more chestnut and less rufescent. The throat is greyer and more distinctly streaked while the breast has more of an ashy than olivaceous wash. The flanks are slightly paler and duller being more cinnamoneous than rufescent; they also have a somewhat ashy wash.

Type: B.M.Reg.No.1927.6.5.1081. Collectors' No. 3054. Adult female. 7th February, 1927. Thua-Luu, Central Annam. Franco-British Indo-China 3rd Expedition. J. Delacour and W. P. Lowe.

Remarks: There are three specimens in addition to the type, one being topotypical. The only variations appear to be slight differences in the clearness of the colour of the breast and in the one male in the series, not topotypical, the colour of the flanks is somewhat richer in tone.

Range: Central Annam and probably northern Laos. (Mr. Deignan has examined a specimen from Wiang Chan which agrees with this diagnosis.)

The four specimens were listed by Delacour and Jabouille (1931, *Oiseaux Indochine Francaise*, 3:285–286) as *Malacocincla sepiaria tardinata* Hartert.

On *Strix poensis* Fraser, Proc. Zool. Soc., p. 189, 1842

by MR. C. W. MACKWORTH-PRAED and CAPT. C. H. B. GRANT

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Sclater, *Syst. Av. Aethiop.* 1, 1924, does not give this name, but Bannerman, *Bds. Trop. W. Afr.* 3, p. 11, 1933, in a footnote states that this name has “generally been placed in the synonymy of *Tyto alba affinis*” Blyth, *Ibis*, p. 388, 1862. Chapin, *Bds. Belg. Congo*, 2, *Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.* 75, p. 404, 1939, states “and I think *T.a.poensis* (Fraser) may be a valid race.”

Fraser's description is in Latin and translated into English reads: “Bill bluish horn; face white; facial disc feathers very compact and silky, outside ring of feathers have the tips white, centre of feathers yellow, bases paler; front part of cheek feathers black; body above brownish yellow with scattered white and purple,* all feathers with the shafts two-thirds white spotted with white with black spaces between; sides of neck yellow; back of neck spotted; primaries and secondaries with nearly obsolete bands, sparsely sordid purple and white; tail hardly forked, reddish yellow, barred fuscous and sparsely spotted with white; underside and legs yellowish white, with blackish angular spots; feet sparsely hidden by woolly white; toes black beset with white hairs.”

This description agrees well with *Tyto alba* especially that of the facial disc, the shaft markings of the upperside and the spotting of the underside.

* Red, reddish, violet, brownish, etc.